

REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

TO THE

LIEUT.-GEN. A. PHELPS,
23, AUGUSTUS ROAD.

GLOUCESTER

Urban Sanitary Authority,

FOR 1878.

Presented to the Sanitary Committee of that Body at the
Meeting held April 29th, 1879, and Ordered
to be Printed.

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REPORT.

I have the honour to present my Annual Report as Medical Officer of Health to the Gloucester Urban Sanitary Authority for the year ending December 31st, 1878.

During the past year, the health of the district has been less affected by epidemic disease than in the two previous years. No deaths have been registered from small pox. The mortality from scarlet fever, whooping cough, and measles, has decreased from 105 in 1877 to 40 in 1878. The number of deaths arising from all causes contrasts favourably with three previous years, having been 783 in 1875, 734 in 1876, and 738 in 1877; in the year 1878, the number of deaths was 728.

The population of the City during the last few years can only be estimated approximately. Adding the number of births together during the years 1875, '76, '77, and 78, and deducting the deaths during the same period there was an increase of 2,306. During the last year about 200 new houses were erected. Allowing the number of inhabitants of each to be 5, I find that the probable number of inhabitants is—

Number estimated in my last report without the increase of births considered during the last 4 years	33,251
Excess of births over deaths during that period	2,306
Inhabitants of (about) 200 new houses in 1878 at 5 per house... ..	1,000
	<hr/> 36,557

As the number of deaths during the past year has been 728 the death-rate per 1,000 has been ~~20.02~~. The average death rate throughout England was 21.7.

In my last report I mentioned that the number of deaths arising from diseases of the respiratory organs was unusually large. The number during 1878 was considerably less, having been in 1877, 130 ; and 119 in 1878.

The connection of houses with the city system of water supply has been largely carried out by owners of property within the district. Mr. READ, the City Surveyor, informs me that during the year 590 such connections have been made. I trust that the regulation which provides for a proper supply of water with reference to newly erected houses will be strictly carried out, as all water derived from wells in the city is impure and unfit for use. The number of cases of preventible illness will never be as small as it might be, until the use of well water for drinking purposes is superseded by the city water supply being laid on to every house. The returns which I give at the end of this report do not show the locality in the district in which the cases of illness and deaths occur, but I find that a large proportion of the cases of diarrhoea and enteric fever are returned from places in which junction has not been made with the city water and the city drainage. I am glad to report that during the last year 334 houses were connected with the city drainage.

As the number of houses using the Witcomb water increases constantly, I must again, as in previous reports, call the attention of the Sanitary Authority to the urgent necessity for procuring an additional supply. There does not appear to be any cause for anticipating a deficiency at

present, but when it is remembered that during the past four years several hundreds of houses have been connected with the city water system, it will be evident that a considerable risk is being incurred of having a short supply, should the rainfall, which has lately been greater than usual, sink to only that of an average year.

Slaughter-houses.—I have frequently visited the slaughter-houses with Mr. G. ALLEN, the Inspector of Nuisances. We have made special reports concerning the granting of licenses in all cases in which applications have been presented to the Sanitary Committee at present in use. They are all in a satisfactory condition, nevertheless, I must repeat what I stated in my report for 1875, when I submitted plans which had been prepared by Mr. SMALL, that I consider the erection of a public slaughter house or houses in a suitable situation is a measure of great importance to the city.

Hospital for Infectious Diseases.—I only heard of one case of small pox in the city during the past year, and that one was received and treated at the Hospital. There were two cases of itch received and treated by me there.

Skin Depôts, &c.—The places where skins of slaughtered animals are collected, the one in the Market, the other in New Inn-lane, have been visited weekly by Mr. ALLEN, and frequently by me. I have also, (especially on Saturday nights,) visited the markets. I have only once found anything of which to complain, which was caused by an accumulation of fish offal which was immediately removed.

Bake Houses.—With Mr. Allen the bake houses have been inspected. We found nothing of which to complain.

Lodging Houses.—It is also my duty to visit these houses (registered), and to see that they comply with the printed regulations. I have inspected them all by day and by night, and found them in a satisfactory condition. I may remark that it would be a considerable sanitary improvement if a greater power, both of inspection and regulation, were placed in the hands of Sanitary Officers with reference to non-registered lodging houses. There are many houses in the city inhabited by different families in which it is impossible to prevent an amount of overcrowding in rooms which is alike opposed to Sanitary requirements and to decency.

Smoke Nuisance.—I have on three previous occasions called attention to the constant breach of the Bye Laws committed by the owners of furnaces which do not consume their own smoke. It is an evil which, having been allowed to exist without interference, is steadily increasing. Constantly I see volumes of smoke poured out from the chimneys of furnaces which, in our large manufacturing towns, would be compelled to abate this nuisance. During the month of October I counted 9 chimneys at once which were for several minutes at half-past nine, a.m., emitting dark smoke in large quantities. In my report for the year 1875 I suggested “that a printed notice be sent by the Authority to the owners of such works as create a smoke nuisance, calling their attention to the Towns Improvement Act of 1858, and the power which it confers on the Sanitary Authority, and requesting that means be taken to abate such nuisance, at the same time warning them that unless this is done within a reasonable given time, steps will be taken by the Board to put the regulations in force, namely, to inflict a “penalty of 40s. for every day during any part of which any fire-place or furnace not

consuming the smoke shall be used." I have received so many complaints on this subject that it is my duty once more to call your attention to it.

Returns.—The tables of sickness which appear at the end of this report are made up from the books kept at the Infirmary and at the Children's Hospital, and those of the Medical Officers of the Poor Law Union. Those relating to deaths are compiled from the copies of the registers of death supplied to me by the Registrars, who also furnish me with the number of births registered during the year.

The details of the work which has been done during the year by the Inspector of nuisances and myself have been laid before the Sanitary Committee of this Authority at the meetings of that body. We have endeavoured as far as possible to carry out the duties of our offices in such a manner as to give as little annoyance as possible. We have but seldom met with any difficulty. I can bear testimony to the willingness of Mr. ALLEN to assist by his advice in rectifying difficulties which we have pointed out. In this his practical knowledge and his familiarity with matters connected with the drainage of the city have been of very great utility. I have also derived considerable assistance from the co-operation of Mr. READ, the City Surveyor, in matters relating to his department.

JOHN P. WILTON,

*Medical Officer of Health to the
Gloucester Urban Sanitary Authority.*

TABLE OF BIRTHS

REGISTERED IN THE URBAN DISTRICT.

	1876.	1877.	1878.
Males	785	644	671
Females	712	607	608
Totals	1497	1251	1279

TABLE OF SICKNESS

Amongst Paupers belonging to the Urban District treated by the Medical Officers of the Union; and of other persons *belonging to the District* treated as In or Out-Patients at the Gloucester General Infirmary, the Children's Hospital, and at the Hospital for Infectious Diseases.

	PAUPERS		IN-PATIENTS		OUT-PATIENTS	
	Under 5 years of age	Over 5 years of age	Under 5 years of age	Over 5 years of age	Under 5 years of age	Over 5 years of age
All cases of sickness & disease	109	740	42	438	408	2203
Measles	20	8	...	2	2	3
Small Pox .....	...	...	...	1	...	...
Scarlatina and Scarlet Fever...	2	2	...	...	...	...
Croup	1	...	...	...	3	1
Whooping Cough	9	8	...	...	70	19
Enteric Fever .....	...	4	...	7	5	1
Other forms of Continued Fever	5	23	1	2	...	10
Diarrhoea and Dysentery	25	26	11	30	44	20
Rheumatic Fever .....	...	4	...	5	...	...
Erysipelas .....	...	14	...	5	2	4
Ague .....	...	2	...	...	...	2
Phthisis .....	...	25	...	25	...	28
Bronchitis, Pleurisy and Pneumonia	16	117	3	26	16	50
Heart Disease .....	...	8	...	14	...	1
Injuries	3	32	9	91	86	589
Other Diseases	28	467	18	230	180	1475

TABLE OF DEATHS

WITHIN THE URBAN SANITARY DISTRICT OF GLOUCESTER IN 1878.

The arrangement is the same as that which I used in my two last Reports, and was copied by me from that which has been adopted by Dr. WRIGHT, the Medical Officer of Health for Cheltenham.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	AGES AT DEATH.							SEXES.		
	Under 1	1 and under 5	5 and under 20	20 and under 40	40 and under 60	60 and under 80	over 80	Males	Femls.	Total
Class I.—Zymotic Diseases.										
Order 1.—MIASMATIC DISEASES ...	45	49	7	6	6	6	1	60	60	120
Scarlet Fever (Scarlatina) ...	3	4	2	...	...	...	...	4	5	9
Croup ...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Whooping Cough ...	7	16	...	...	...	...	...	8	15	23
Measels ...	3	9	...	...	...	...	...	6	6	12
Continued { Enteric Fever	...	6	3	2	1	...	...	5	7	12
{ Other or doubtful	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	1
Influenza ...	...	1	1	...	1	1	...	3	1	4
Diarrhœa ...	31	12	...	1	1	3	1	29	20	49
Pyæmia ...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	2	...	2
Rheumatism ...	...	...	1	2	2	2	...	2	5	7
Order 2.—ENTHETIC ...	12	...	...	1	...	...	...	4	9	13
Syphilis ...	12	...	...	1	...	...	...	4	9	13
Order 3.—DIETETIC ...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	1	2
Malnutrition ...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Delirium Tremens ...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	1
Class II.—Constitutional Diseases										
Order 1.—DIATHETIC ...	1	...	1	...	12	4	3	7	14	21
Anæmia ...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Dropsy ...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Cancer ...	...	...	...	...	12	4	3	6	13	19
Order II.—TUBERCULAR ...	18	20	16	30	19	5	...	55	53	108
Scrofula... ..	1	2	...	...	1	...	...	3	1	4
Tabes Mesenterica ...	15	9	...	3	...	...	...	18	9	27
Phthisis ...	...	4	13	27	18	5	...	26	41	67
Hydrocephalus ...	2	2	1	...	...	...	...	4	1	5
Meningitis ...	...	2	2	...	...	...	...	3	1	4
Peritonitis ...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Carried forward ...	77	69	24	37	38	15	4	127	137	264

TABLE OF DEATHS

WITHIN THE URBAN SANITARY DISTRICT OF GLOUCESTER IN 1878,
CONTINUED.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	AGES AT DEATH.							SEXES.		
	Under 1	1 and under 5	5 and under 20	20 and under 40	40 and under 60	60 and under 80	Over 80	Males	Femls.	Total
Brought forward ...	77	69	24	37	38	15	4	127	137	264
Class III.—Local Diseases.										
Order 1.—NERVOUS SYSTEM ...	25	5	6	6	14	30	4	56	34	90
Apoplexy ...	...	...	...	...	2	14	1	9	8	17
Paralysis ...	...	...	...	2	3	14	3	13	9	22
Epilepsy ...	...	...	2	1	1	...	...	3	1	4
Abscess of Brain ...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	1	1	2
Softening of Brain ...	...	...	...	1	2	...	...	3	...	3
Cerebral Hæmorrhage ...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	1
Brain Disease ...	...	1	4	1	3	2	...	8	3	11
Convulsions ...	24	4	...	...	...	...	...	18	10	28
Disease of Spinal Cord ...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	1
Laryngismus Stridulus ...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Order 2.—ORGANS OF CIRCULATION ...	...	...	4	3	13	25	1	26	20	46
Heart Disease... ..	...	...	4	3	13	24	1	26	19	45
Angina Pectoris ...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	1
Order 3.—RESPIRATORY ORGANS ...	28	20	4	14	18	30	5	63	56	119
Bronchitis ...	14	14	...	2	9	23	3	34	31	65
Pleurisy ...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	1	1	2
Pneumonia ...	9	4	3	12	6	4	1	22	17	39
Asthma ...	...	...	...	...	2	3	...	3	2	5
Congestion of Lungs ...	5	...	...	...	...	...	1	3	3	6
Other forms of Lung Disease ...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Trachea (inflammation of) ...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Order 4.—DIGESTIVE ORGANS ...	4	2	1	4	9	6	2	14	14	28
Stomatitis ...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	1	2
Cynanche Tonsillaris ...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Stricture of Oesophagus ...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	2	...	2
Enteritis ...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	2
Peritonitis ...	...	...	1	1	...	...	1	1	2	3
Ascites ...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	1
Stomach Disease ...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	1
Hæmatemesis ...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	1
Leucocythemia ...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	1
Hernia ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Obstruction of Bowels ...	1	...	...	1	...	1	...	1	2	3
Disease of Liver ...	...	...	...	...	5	3	...	3	5	8
Icterus ...	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	1	1	2
Order 5.—URINARY ORGANS.	...	...	...	2	8	5	...	7	8	15
Kidney Disease ...	...	...	...	...	2	2	...	1	3	4
Bright's Disease ...	...	...	...	2	4	1	...	2	5	7
Disease of Bladder ...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	1
" Prostate ...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	1
Retention of Urine ...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	2	...	2
Carried forward ...	134	96	39	66	100	111	16	293	269	562

TABLE OF DEATHS

WITHIN THE URBAN SANITARY DISTRICT OF GLOUCESTER IN 1878,
CONTINUED.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	AGES AT DEATH.							SEXES.		
	Under 1	1 and under 5	5 and under 20	20 and under 40	40 and under 60	60 and under 80	over 80	Males.	Femls.	Total.
Brought forward	134	96	39	66	100	111	16	293	269	562
Class III.—Local Diseases <i>continued</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Order 6.—GENERATIVE ORGANS	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	2	2
Ovarian disease ... ..	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	1
Tumour of Uterus ... ..	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	1
Order 7.—CONNECTED WITH PARTURITION }	...	...	1	4	...	...	...	...	5	5
Labour ... ..	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	2	2
Premature delivery of Dead Child	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	1
Placenta Prævia ... ..	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	1
Puerperal Peritonitis ... ..	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Order 8.—ORGANS OF LOCOMOTION	...	...	1	1	...	2	...	4	...	4
Disease of Knee Joint ... ..	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	2	...	2
Gangrene of Foot ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	1
Caries of Spine ... ..	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	1
Order 9.—DISEASE OF CUTANEOUS SYSTEM	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Inpetigo	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Order 10.—MALFORMATIONS.	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	2
Spina Bifida	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Malformed Heart	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Class IV.—Developmental Disease	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Order 1.—DISEASES OF CHILDREN	42	4	...	...	...	...	...	28	18	46
Premature Birth	31	...	...	...	...	...	...	20	11	31
Teething	10	4	...	...	...	...	...	7	7	14
Aphthæ	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Order 2.—DISEASES OF AGED	...	...	...	...	...	24	34	21	37	58
Old Age... ..	...	...	...	...	...	24	34	21	37	58
Order 3.—DISEASE OF NUTRITION	15	1	...	...	...	...	...	12	4	16
Atrophy	15	1	...	...	...	...	...	12	4	16
Class V.—Violent Deaths, &c.	3	3	4	2	4	4	...	15	5	20
Burns ... ..	...	3	...	1	...	...	...	3	1	4
Accident	3	...	4	1	2	2	...	11	1	12
Accidental poisoning ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	2	2
Found Drowned ... ..	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	1
Suicide ... ..	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	1
Not Classified	3	2	...	1	1	4	1	5	7	12
Sudden—not ascertained	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	2	...	2
Causes not specified or ill defined }	2	2	...	1	1	3	1	3	7	10
Total	200	106	45	74	107	145	51	381	347	728

TABLE OF INQUESTS

HELD ON INHABITANTS OF
THE GLOUCESTER URBAN SANITARY DISTRICT DURING THE
YEAR 1878.

*I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. Lovegrove, the City Coroner for returns
from which I have compiled this table.*

DATE	NAME OF DECEASED	AGE	VERDICT
1878.			
February 5	A man unknown... ..	(about) 45 years	Found drowned
March 8	Elizabeth Bartlett	24 "	Temporary insanity
" "	John Thomas	66 "	Natural causes
" 11	Ben. Thos. Watkins	3 months	Accidental death
" 18	Agnes Smith	35 years	Ditto ditto
April 9	Alice A. M. Knight	11 months	Ditto ditto
" 20	John Drinkwater	3½ years	Ditto ditto
" "	George Ryder	22 "	Natural causes.
May 4	Elizabeth Wicks!... ..	71 "	Accidentally poisoned
July 29	Alfred Wells	{ 1 year & 4 months	Accidental death
Sept. 23	William Dunlievie	25 years	Natural causes.
October 7	Elsie Thorpe	3 "	Ditto ditto
" 8	Charlotte Witts Beard	60 "	Ditto ditto
" 29	Henry Newman	9 "	Accidental death
Novr. 4	Wm. Mark Howell	{ 3 years and 11 months	Ditto ditto
" 8	Wm. Gardner	{ 1 year & 8 months	Ditto ditto
" 16	Christopher Burnett	70 years	Ditto ditto
" 18	Joseph Davis	66 "	Found dead
" 23	E. Butler	74 "	Accidental death
" 25	Henry Meadows... ..	58 "	Ditto ditto

PORT SANITARY AUTHORITY.

During the past year I visited Sharpness four times to inspect vessels on board of which cases of illness had been reported. I found nothing of an infectious nature. There has been no illness of an epidemic nature on board any vessel in any portion of the district under the control of this Authority, nor has there been any cargo containing offensive matter since I presented my last report.

I have been in frequent communication with Capt. CALWAY, the Sanitary Inspector at the Sharpness Docks. During the last four years a regulation has been enforced by him by which the detection of infectious disease was ensured and its spreading prevented. I drew up a form which is printed in English, French, German and Italian, copies of which were given to every pilot belonging to the Port. On boarding a vessel in the river to bring her up to Sharpness this form is shown to the Master. In it he is directed immediately to notify any case of illness on board his vessel to the Inspector, and if it appears to be of an epidemic character I am at once communicated with. This duty has, I believe, been faithfully carried out by the pilots.

In the autumn of the year there was a fear generally expressed of the possibility of the introduction of yellow fever into this country by vessels arriving from infected ports. I did not share in this apprehension, as I do not believe that the conditions necessary for the existence of this disease can be found in England. But I urged Capt. CALWAY to be especially careful in his enquiries, and suggested to him the steps which I considered it would be wise for him to take, and at the same time to telegraph me if any suspicious case came under his notice.

In the year 1878, foreign sailors suffering with the following complaints were received for treatment at the Gloucester General Infirmary.

INJURIES	...	...	...	...	...	12
AGUE	...	...	...	...	...	2
ENTERIC FEVER	...	...	...	...	...	1
MALARIAL FEVER	...	...	...	...	...	1
FEBRICULA	...	...	...	...	...	2
PNEUMONIA	...	...	...	...	...	1
SCURVY	...	...	...	...	...	1
ACUTE RHEUMATISM	...	...	...	...	...	1
ERYSIPELAS	...	...	...	...	...	1
ABSCCESS	...	...	...	...	...	1
JAUNDICE	...	...	...	...	...	1
SYNOVITIS	...	...	...	...	...	1
ANÆMIA	...	...	...	...	...	1
MALINGERING	...	...	...	...	...	1

The above all recovered.

One case of TYPHOID FEVER died in the Infirmary.

